

Discover your skills

Use your time at university to explore your professional goals and desires without pressure from the outside. Here are four tips for you.

Get to know yourself

You're in the middle of your studies and your life lies before you like a blank sheet of paper. What's your first brushstroke going to be: What line of work are you interested in? What environment would you like to work in? You can only take these decisions if you know yourself well. So take the time while you're studying to try things out, also off the beaten track. An Erasmus semester in Barcelona might be of interest, an internship in the USA, the student initiative on social entrepreneurship or the debating club? Be open to whatever you come across along the way. If you're not keen on the field of study you've chosen, change it. Take every opportunity to get to know yourself and find out what it is you want. It will never be so easy to change track as right now. Always keep at the back of your mind that your career grows together with your skills and interests – and the detours may be the very thing you need for your personal growth.

Look for a mentor

After you graduate, there will be many doors open to you. But which route should you take? Is it better to take a job in a big corporation or in a start-up? Or would you like to add a PhD? You will find it easier to take all these decisions if you can discuss them with somebody who knows not only you but also the job market. So look for a mentor while you're still on your degree course. These are people with experience who pass on their professional knowledge to you as a mentee with less life and/or professional experience. The aim is to support you in the development of your career and your personal growth. A mentor can offer you guidance, give you many helpful tips along the way, establish contacts or boost your self-confidence for applications. For example, both students and alumni can find a mentor through the TUM Community. You can find out more about the mentoring programs at TUM at www.community.tum.de/en/mentoring-at-tum

During your studies, TUM offers many opportunities to experiment and to get to know your own skills and strengths in the process.

A semester abroad can reveal new paths for you to explore:

www.international.tum.de/en/global/going-abroad

On the TUM Jobportal you will find lots of offers for student jobs and internships in the industry:

www.tum.de/jobboerse

The range of student initiatives on offer at TUM will provide you with practical experience coupled with generous space for your creativity:

www.tum.de/en/community/campus-life/student-clubs

Be inspired

It's also a good idea to start networking early. This is not about going to boring events where you mainly have to get rid of your visiting cards. In fact, the trick is to get to know like-minded people with whom you can swap stories about what you've been through and who you can learn from. You may also meet managers who know what's needed in companies – and who may even recommend you for a job. For example, you could start your networking by joining the get-togethers of your student council or at alumni meetings of the TUM Community. There are also specific networks of professional associations or those for entrepreneurs and founders or the Women of TUM. You will also find numerous subject and country-specific groups in the TUM Community – ranging from TUM India to TUM Australia, TUM Mathematics Alumni to the Sustainability Professionals. Take a look at www.community.tum.de/forum.

Gain practical experience

Admittedly, you will learn plenty of professional knowledge and the latest research results in lectures and seminars, but don't forget there's a lot to be discovered outside the lecture theatre. Use your study time to take on internships, by all means in different areas that might be of interest to you. You could maybe look for a student job where you can gain insight into the working world over a longer period of time. By the way, over 81 percent of employers stated the following in the job trends study: Practical experience during your studies counts for more than a very good degree within the minimum period of study. That's because it will provide you with exclusive insights into different areas of a company, strengthen your network and give you valuable practical experience.